

## UNCLE SAM'S CIPHERS.

Some Code Books on Our Battle Ships Are Ready to Be Thrown Overboard.

Nothing could be more absurd than the statement recently published to the effect that the Spaniards have found the key to the cipher used by the State Department and are reading the telegrams which pass between Washington and Havana. The secret code employed in this service is one of the most inscrutable cryptograms ever devised, the key word changing automatically from time to time. The translation of a message framed in it, without a key, is practically an impossibility. Of course, a key might be stolen, a copy of it being in the possession of every Consul-General and Minister of the United States in foreign countries, but it could hardly be utilized with success by an outsider, owing to the shifting of the key-word by pre-arrangement between the parties corresponding.

In fact, the State Department's cipher is so complicated as to interfere seriously with its usefulness. When a telegram is received, it is apt to be a twenty-four hour job to make it out. The code employs groups of figures to represent words and phrases, and a system of this sort always affords opportunity for mistakes in transmission.

At the same time, it is better in this respect than a system that uses cryptographic words, inasmuch as the latter are likely to go wrong over the wires. Suppose, for example, that "Dumelle" stands for the President of the United States. A foreign telegraph operator, unacquainted with English, may get the word crooked and make a lot of trouble. Governments have often been frightened out of their wits by mistakes in ciphers.

Figures, however, are the same in all the languages of civilized nations. The cipher now employed by the State Department has been in use for about twenty years. However, the Government has always utilized cryptograms in its correspondence since Revolutionary times. In those days nearly every public man had his own private cipher, because of the practice of intercepting or tampering with letters. The President of the United States uses the State Department's code when he sends a secret dispatch, but this rarely happens, and a cipher telegram has not gone out from the White House in the last half dozen years.

So many mistakes occur in the transmission of cryptographic messages that the cipher is used only when necessary for secrecy or economy. It cuts down the cost of telegrams very greatly, thus making an important saving in cases where, as in the difficulty with Chili, continued correspondence has to be kept up at an expense of \$2, or more a word, whereas not nearly so much attention as formerly is paid to the keeping of diplomatic secrets, the dealings of the nations with one another being much more open and frank.

Diplomacy used to be a mere game of tricks, and the ablest Ambassador was he who could lie most skillfully. The rifling of letters was considered a legitimate part of the business, the art being brought to such perfection that dispatches were opened without apparent injury to their seals. One of the most famous experts in this line was Walsingham, Secretary of State to Queen Elizabeth.

Nearly every one of the executive departments uses a cipher more or less in its correspondence. The Treasury in 1883 adopted a code that is still in use, though it has undergone many improvements since then. One purpose of it is to save telegraph tolls, the wires being worked very freely between the Treasury and the various sub-treasuries and mints in different cities.



Ninety Years Old and a Poetess.

But frequently it would be undesirable that the public should have knowledge of the contents of the dispatches. It might not be well to warn train-robbers that a big shipment of gold was to be made at a certain time and by a certain train from Carson to San Francisco. Furthermore, information gathered by the department might be utilized for stock jobbing purposes.

## The Australian Murderer, Butler, in His Cell on the Steamship Mariposa.

Many of the dispatches have reference to financial conditions and prospects. The most notable feature of the Treasury cipher is its simplicity. There is nothing for an outside translator to start with. It consists of a lot of words with arbitrary meanings; also of peculiar associations and sentences of words with meanings attached. The words are names of people, animals, plants, gems, etc. Dispatches in this cryptogram can be read offhand by those who understand it, and usually without reference to the key.

It is not necessary to look the door and go to work on a telegram as if it were an inscription in cuneiform hieroglyphics from a Babylonian tomb. Keys of this cipher are kept at all the sub-treasuries, mints and assay offices. When the code is changed, as has happened twice since 1883, new keys are forwarded to those establishments by registered mail, and the old ones are carefully destroyed by burning.

There is another cipher in use in the Treasury Department, by the Bureau of the Secret Service. A key to it is in the hands of every detective. The first cryptographic code devised for the War Department was made by Aaron Stager, in October, 1861, and the first key to it was entrusted to the famous detective Allen C. Pinkerton, while employed by the Government on a dangerous mission in Kentucky. The War Department to-day has a cipher of its own, but rarely uses it. It was employed at the time of the Chicago riots and during the Indian campaign of 1890-91.

**MUNCHAUSEN HONORED.** With much solemnity the people of Munich, noted chiefly for beer, have been celebrating the centenary of the death of Baron Munchausen, which occurred on February 22, 1797.

Baron Hieronymus Karl Friedrich von Munchausen was a Hanoverian nobleman, a subject of the first three Georges. He was born in 1720 and died in 1797. He took service in a Russian cavalry regiment, but retired in old age to his ancestral estate at Bodenwerder, in Hanover.

## MICHIGAN'S AGED POETESS

Mrs. Celinda Cushman, of Coldwater, Wrote These Verses in Her 91st Year.

There is an aged poetess in Michigan who recently wrote some verses in celebration of her ninety-second birthday. She is Mrs. Celinda Cushman, of Coldwater, in that State. She recently gathered her children and grandchildren at the farm on her birthday and read the following verses of her own composition:

I'm ninety-two years old to-day.  
Am feeble, wrinkled, old and gray;  
Still I am here, and all may see  
In my right mind, you'll all agree.

Full fourscore years of precious time  
I've passed in this delightful clime;  
I love its forests, rocks and hills,  
Its valleys, lakes and rugged hills.

The universal mighty whole—  
Nature the body, God the soul—  
Is just as glorious and gay  
As our creation's natal day.

Age leaves no wrinkles on its brow;  
Time is but one eternal now;  
It moves precisely as when young,  
When first the stars together sung.

Supremely blest the human race,  
Endowed with elements of grace,  
With method, reason, power and will,  
His mighty destiny to fill.

With noble attributes of mind  
And powers of progress all combined,  
Nought but to keep the narrow way  
That leads to realms of endless day.

You need not join the church for show,  
To let your friends and neighbors know  
You are a Christian, good and hale;  
Your daily walk will tell the tale.

Nor put on sacrilegious airs,  
And for a pretence make long prayers;  
But feed the hungry and oppressed,  
The widow and the fatherless.

Give words of comfort to the sad,  
The broken, contrite heart make glad;  
Then will the dews of heaven shed  
Their blessings on your weary head.

I feel that I am nearly through;  
Shall pass through scenes entirely new;  
Assured that I shall never die,  
Although a change is drawing nigh.

Oh, wondrous change! The spirit birth,  
Freud from the elements of earth;  
I dread the struggle and the pain,  
But know I must be born again.

Exhausted nature pleads in vain  
To longer on this earth remain;  
She sinks to rest, is sinking still,  
Till all the wheels of life stand still.

I am not weary of delay,  
And more inclined to longer stay;  
Earth has its changes every hour,  
Its possibilities and powers.

Behold me now, quite near the goal  
Awaiting every human soul,  
And on my feet do firmly stand,  
Bound to that sunny spirit land.

**A QUEER SHAH.**

He Threw His Crown on the Floor and Declined to Behold Some Robbers.

The new Shah of Persia has some qualities which make him a very picturesque character, and perhaps he may prove a modern Haroun-al-Raschid.

J. Foster Fraser, an Englishman who has spent some time with His Majesty, says that the coronation ceremony took place on a very hot day, and as soon as His Majesty could escape he hastened off to his private rooms. Some one found him ten minutes afterwards sitting in a draught and in his shirt sleeves, on some steps in the corridor, the crown still on his head,

though pushed somewhat awry. "Your Majesty will be ill if you sit there," was said. "Oh, I am so warm, and this thing," he answered, taking off the crown and pitching it on one side, "is so heavy; I hope I shall never have to put it on again."

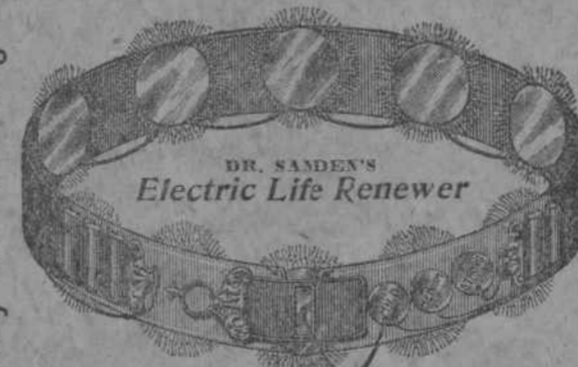
The Shah's predecessor, so it used to be said, had a summary way of getting rid of disgraced Ministers, but the infliction of pain, or the exercise of despotic power to injure any one bodily, is antagonistic to the present Shah's desires. Indeed, Mr. Fraser thinks he might almost go so far as to say he is something of a Socialist. Some time ago a gang of hill robbers was captured and taken before him to receive sentence that their heads be chopped off. He inquired into their case and found they had been leading a hard and perilous life. "Poor men," he observed, "I suppose they robbed because they wanted something to eat."

and then a sharp "Cut their heads off!"

## What Makes Men Strong?

**ELECTRICITY**—The Fountain of Youth, the perpetual energy which sustains all animal life. It is the source from which springs the bubbling spirit of joy in young manhood. It is the vital element which keeps up the nerve force in old men to a good old age. When the body is charged with it the vital powers are strong. Confidence flashes from the eye and the step is firm. Without it—well, how is it with you? Are you weak, gloomy, wanting physical and brain force? If you are weak you should begin at once using this famous appliance for weak men.

Why Not Be Strong?



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This appliance is the result of twenty years of close study, and contains all the recent improvements known to science. It is, in fact, a perfect battery made in the form of a belt, to be worn on the body while the patient rests.

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## IT CURES YOU WHILE YOU SLEEP.

The electric current from this belt is felt as soon as it touches the body. This is warranted under a forfeit of \$5,000. It can be regulated to any power required, while the belt is on the body, and is worn while you sleep without the slightest trouble.



DR. SANDEN, 156 St. James St., Montreal, Quebec.

## PRISON CELL ON SHIPBOARD.

The Stateroom for Butler, the Australian Murderer, Turned Into a Veritable Jail.

When the steamer Mariposa sailed from San Francisco last week, bound for Australia ports, she carried one passenger to whom the trip meant death swift and sure.

In stateroom No. 31, on the starboard side of the vessel, Frank Butler, the Australian prototype of H. H. Holmes will be securely chained to the floor of the cabin and guarded constantly by three detectives, who will have circumnavigated the globe, upon their arrival in Melbourne, in pursuit of the fugitive criminal. The crimes laid at Butler's door are appalling. He is charged with having murdered a score of men in a most cowardly, brutal manner.

His modus operandi was simple. He had been a prospector in the gold fields of Australia and was familiar with mining work. His scheme was to advertise for a partner to join him in a prospecting tour, who was plentifully supplied with money. Then he would lead the unsuspecting victim miles away from human habitation. When he reached a spot secure from detection he would order the victim to dig, ostensibly for an ore vein, but in reality he was making his own grave. When the work was completed Butler would murder the man and throw him into the pit.

Previous to disposing of the body, he would rifle the pockets of the victim and then return to civilization with a fanciful tale about illness or accident to account for the absence of his comrade. His last victim, a Captain Weller, proved his undoing. Weller, who was a retired sea captain, answered Butler's advertisement as many others had done before. Together they started out, and before two weeks had elapsed Butler returned alone. This time he took the name of his victim and listed as able seaman on a bark bound from Melbourne to San Francisco. The disappearance of Weller had aroused suspicion and detectives were hot on his trail. They heard of his sailing for this country and they immediately set sail for New York. They reached across the continent and reached San Francisco several days before the vessel on which Butler had shipped reached port.

When arrested, Butler denied his identity and all knowledge of the crimes of which he was accused. But his possession of Captain Weller's papers, in view of the fact that Weller's body had been found with every evidence of foul play, was evidence most conclusive, and the papers asking for his extradition were honored without delay. The detectives sailed with their prisoner on the Mariposa. The stateroom secured for Butler is located amidships, and for the time being will be a veritable prison cell. The lower of the three bunks has been unchanged, but every other article

steel ring has been riveted to the floor close to the bunk, to which he will be fastened with chains should he show the least signs of insubordination. The steel storm shutter of the port hole that serves as a window to the stateroom has been closed and sealed, and the only ray of sunlight that will enter the room will be through a brass rimmed daylight. The three detectives will take turns watching the prisoner until the end of the voyage. The stateroom for the detectives while off duty will be directly opposite that of the prisoner, so that they can give immediate assistance in case of necessity.

Each morning the prisoner will be exercised on the deck, but it will be at a time when the other passengers are not stirring. In this walk he will be chained to two detectives.

Butler's fate is sure. Positive evidence of his crimes is in the possession of the Australian authorities, and there is no doubt that an early verdict of death will be meted out to him.

## JONAH IN THE WHALE.

This Old Whaler Shows How Jonah Could Be Swallowed and Still Live.

An old whaler, who is a devout Bible student, writes to the Sunday Journal about Dr. Lyman Abbott's sermon on Jonah and the whale. He is Mr. George A. Lord, of No. 327 Main street, Springfield, Mass., and he proceeds to show how Jonah might have been swallowed and lived in the whale as follows:

"Being an old whaler, I have had more and better opportunities of studying the habits and characteristics of the whale than those who have never assisted in capturing one. In the first place, the whale is not a fish. The whale is a warm-blooded animal, and is classified among the mammals. It suckles its young, and the sex is spoken of among whalers as the bull and cow whale.

"The whale referred to in the Book of Jonah is the sperm whale, which is found mostly in the Tropics. This species is different from the right whale, which is found in the colder latitudes.

"The sperm whale has a large throat and can swallow large pieces of squid, often three two feet square, and as long. It has a formidable set of teeth with which to cut the squid. The right whale has a very small throat and therefore has to subsist upon small fish.

"His methods of feeding are to rush into a school of small fish with mouth wide open, taking fish and water together. He then closes his mouth and blows the water out through the blowhole on the top of his head. The fish are retained in the mouth by the hairs on the roof of his mouth. He then swallows the fish.

"Another peculiarity of the sperm whale in connection with the story is that, being warm blooded, it must have oxygen. Now the sperm whale has the means of taking in air to allow him to sound, that is, to descend to the bottom of 250 fathoms, and remain there for thirty minutes at a time. He does this only when harpooned. After that, he is fastened to the whale and he has expended all the oxygen he has to do so to quietly wait until he starts to land. The line or rope is drawn into the boat, and when he is at the surface the officer in the head of the boat is

ready, lance in hand, to pierce his heart before he has time to recover.

"I have given in detail the method of capturing a sperm whale to show that, as the whale has no difficulty in swallowing a man and, as a man in his stomach would not suffer from the cold at the same time a provision has been made whereby the whale can store up sufficient oxygen to sustain life for a long period, much the same as a camel can store up water.

"About two years ago there appeared in the columns of the Boston Globe an article describing the experience of a sailor belonging to a French whaler, who, when the boat had been broken to pieces by the whale's flukes, had been swallowed by the whale. Every one on board supposed the man was dead. But after having removed the blubber from the carcass they opened the stomach to get the man and give him a Christian burial.

"To the surprise of all, the man was found alive, having been in the stomach of a dead sperm whale for thirty-six hours in the stomach of a dead whale. Is it not possible that a man could live seventy-two hours in a live whale?"

## FRUGS TO THE RESCUE.

A Cargo Sent to Help Save the Unhappy Icelanders from Mosquitoes.

There is a country which until recently was without frogs, and consequently the inhabitants suffered from mosquitoes more than those of New Jersey.

Dr. Ehlers, whom the Danish Government sent out in the Summer of 1895, along with an English, a French and a German colleague, to study the causes of disease in Iceland, has written a series of very interesting articles about Iceland in one of the Danish papers. He says that in some parts of Iceland, especially round the larger lakes, Thingvallvatn, Myvatn, and Svatvatn, the mosquitoes and flies have become so much of a plague that people living around Myvatn (Mosquito Water) are obliged, while working in the fields, to protect their hands and faces with gloves, veils or masks. Iceland has neither reptiles nor toads to destroy these pestiferous tormentors. The English physician, therefore, devised a very clever plan, and his German colleague and Dr. Ehlers, carried it out, to import frogs to Iceland. The German took along with him a hundred vigorous frogs from Koenigsberg, and Dr. Ehlers took a supply of forty frogs, which he had captured with great difficulty at Charlottenburg. The summer season of the Crown Prince of Denmark. While the frogs from Germany—in a packing case filled with holes and lined with yushes, and drenched with fresh water several times a day—endured the long voyage capitally, thirty-eight of the Danish frogs died the very first night they spent on board of a contagious disease of the nature and cause of which baffled the understanding of the learned doctors, though it was pronounced with certainty to be hemorrhagic.

At any rate, the frogs were let loose on July 18, 1895, in a bog north of the hot springs, by Reykjavik, the capital of Iceland, the doctors hoping that kind folks would introduce them later on to the mosquitoes and flies at Thingvallvatn. Croaking, chirping, the hundred and two frogs disappeared in the bog.

Perhaps, adds Dr. Ehlers, "my English colleague's plan will succeed, perhaps July 19, 1895, will only be remembered by the ducks that waddled up to the spot from the shore and surveyed the little unknown beings with great interest."

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